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Pocahontas

Chapter 4 Part a. Question 5.

TOWNS SETTLED AND OCCUPATIONS ESTABLISHED FROM 1810 TO 1860

The early settlers of Pocahontas did not settle many towns. Huntersville being the only one of any importance. William Sharp Sr. was the first permanent settler at Huntersville, but John Bradshaw was the one who did the most toward making the town one of importance.

For a number of years previous to the organization of the county in 1821, Huntersville had been a public place as merchants and tradesmen from the east would arrange to meet hunters here and barter goods for the products of the hunt. It was suggested by some that Smithville would be a good name for the place, but John Bradshaw insisted upon the name Huntersville as a special compliment to the hunters who came to his home to meet the tradesmen, including John Harness of Staunton, and to who the place owed so much of its development. It was John Bradshaw, too, who gave enough land, from his vast estate to the county as a place to build all the public buildings so that Huntersville could become the county seat when the county was organized in 1821. A site near Edray had been chosen for the county seat, but after Bradshaw's offer was changed.

For many years after it became the county seat it retained its importance as the principal trading center for the entire county. The largest stores were usually there. Many people came each month to the courts and once a year the "Big Muster" of the 127th Virginia Regiment brought out all the men between the ages of 18 and 45 for military practice. During the superior courts and the Regimental Muster quite a number of people from the eastern counties would come here to sell hats, saddles, harness, stone ware, tobacco, thirty cent whiskey, and many other things. Therefore, the little town of Huntersville flourished in a big way. It was no unusual thing for its merchants to realize three to

four hundred percent on dry goods and groceries during the period 1832 to 1845.

During the winter 1852 almost all of the business, part of the town was destroyed by fire. During the Civil War it was burned by Federal troops, sent from Beverly, to prevent it being a Confederate depot for military supplies.

After the war it again grew into an important little town. Flourishing stores were operated by Amos Barlow, Lourey and Son, Lourey and Doyle. Improved methods of farming were adopted and the town took on a more pleasing appearance than ever before.

One of the principals hotels was operated by J. Williams, John Buscard, John Holden, Porterfield Wallace, I. C. Carpenter and E. Campbell in succession, but was burned by federal troops during the Civil War.

Salooning was for many years a flourishing business but in 1843 licenses for salooning was refused by the Court. This of course did away with saloons in the county.

Blacksmithing was also an excellent business as there was much horse shoeing and wagon repairing to be done. Finleys' shop stood near the Cummings Creek road and from three to four hands were employed. Another chop was operated by Jack Fidd., Later by William Dilley, a very skilled artisan; and G. W. Ginger in succession. (Though Ginger was not there until after the war)

For many years a thriving business was carried on in the harness and saddle business. First by John Haines who employed four or five hands. After by William Fertig, and later by William Groce and Son.

Tailoring was also a thriving business. Messers Campbell, John and James Holden employed several men and were kept busy during early fall and winter or when weddings were in prospect. Weddings also gave the saddles a good trade. It was considered good form for the bride to have a new outfit, horse, saddle and bridle. The groom would not think he had much chance of success if he did not do his courting on a new saddle and bridle made at Huntersville.